

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed May 19, 2004. In order to advance prosecution of this case, Applicant amends Claims 17, 23, and 28. Applicants cancel Claims 16, 22, 27, and 29 without waiver or disclaimer. Applicants previously canceled Claim 18 without disclaimer or prejudice. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 1-15 and 39-40 are allowed and that Claims 21, 22, 24, 27, and 29-38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants amend Claims 17, 23, and 28 to include elements of Claim 22, 27, and 29, respectively, thereby placing them in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications.

Section 102 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 16, 17, 19, 20, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,360,271 issued to Schuster et al. ("Schuster"). Applicants amend Claim 17 and 28 to include elements of Claim 22 and 29, respectively, which the Examiner indicates are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited references. Amended Claims 17 and 28 are thus allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 17 and 28, and their respective dependents.

Applicant cancels Claims 16, thereby obviating the Examiner's rejection of this claim. Applicant also cancels Claims 22 and 29, thereby obviating the Examiner's objection to these claims. Applicant wishes to note that, with respect to all amendments and cancellations herein, Applicant reserves the right to pursue broader subject matter than that presently claimed through the filing of continuations and/or other related applications.

Section 103 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 23 and 25-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Schuster* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,282,196 issued to Lyons et al. ("Lyons"). Applicants amend Claim 23 to include elements of Claim 27 which the Examiner indicates are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited references. Amended Claim 23 is thus allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claim 23 and its dependents.

Applicant also cancels Claim 27, thereby obviating the Examiner's objection to this claim. Applicant wishes to note that, with respect to all amendments and cancellations herein, Applicant reserves the right to pursue broader subject matter than that presently claimed through the filing of continuations and/or other related applications.

Conclusions

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of all pending Claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

No fees are believed to be due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant



Samir A. Bhavsar
Reg. No. 41,617

2001 Ross Avenue, Suite 600
Dallas, Texas 75201-2980
(214) 953-6581

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CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

Customer Number:

05073